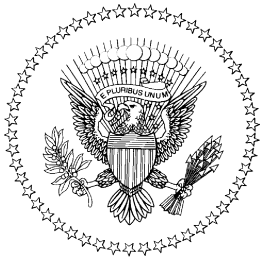


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, August 20, 2001
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Editor's Note: The President was at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on August 17, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, August 17, 2001

The President's Radio Address

August 11, 2001

Good morning. This week I made a decision on a complex and difficult issue, the Federal role in embryonic stem cell research. Based on preliminary work, scientists believe these cells, which may have the ability to replace diseased or defective human tissue, offer great promise. They could help improve the lives of those who suffer from many terrible diseases—from juvenile diabetes to Alzheimer's, from Parkinson's to spinal cord injuries.

While stem cells come from a variety of sources, most scientists, at least today, believe that research on stem cells from human embryos offers the most promise because these cells have the potential to develop into all the tissues of the body.

This research offers great hope for treatments and possible cures. Research on embryonic stem cells also raises profound ethical questions because extracting the stem cell destroys the embryo and thus destroys the potential for life.

Some argue this small cluster of cells is not yet a human life because it cannot develop on its own. Yet an ethicist argued, this is the same way you and I started our lives. "One goes with a heavy heart if we use these," he said, "because we are dealing with the seeds of the next generation."

At its core, this issue forces us to confront fundamental questions about the beginnings of life and the ends of science. It lies at a difficult moral intersection, juxtaposing the need to protect life in all its phases with the prospect of saving and improving life in all its stages. As the genius of science extends the horizons of what we can do, we increasingly confront complex problems about what we should do.

In recent weeks we learned that scientists have created human embryos in test tubes solely to experiment on them. This is deeply

troubling and a warning sign that should prompt all of us to think through these issues very carefully. We recoil at the idea of growing human beings for spare body parts or creating life for our convenience. I strongly oppose cloning. And while we must devote enormous energy to conquering disease, it is equally important that we pay attention to the moral concerns raised by the new frontier of human embryo stem cell research. Even the most noble ends do not justify any means.

Embryonic stem cell research offers both great promise and great peril, so I have decided we must proceed with great care. As a result of private research, more than 60 genetically diverse stem cell lines already exist. They were created from embryos that have already been destroyed, and they have the ability to regenerate themselves indefinitely, creating ongoing opportunities for research. I have concluded that we should allow Federal funds to be used for research on these existing stem cell lines where the life and death decision has already been made.

Leading scientists tell me research on these 60 lines has great promise that could lead to breakthrough therapies and cures. This allows us to explore the promise and potential of stem cell research without crossing a fundamental moral line by providing taxpayer funding that would sanction or encourage further destruction of human embryos that have at least the potential for life.

I also believe that great scientific progress can be made through aggressive Federal funding of research on umbilical cord, placenta, adult, and animal stem cells, which do not involve the same moral dilemma. This year the Government will spend \$250 million on this important research.

As we go forward, I hope we'll always be guided by both intellect and heart, by both our capabilities and our conscience. I have made this decision with great care, and I pray it is the right one.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:40 a.m. on August 10 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 11. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 10 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Waiver of Sanctions for the Export of Select U.S. Munitions List U.S.-Origin Helicopter and Armored Personnel Carrier Spare Parts and Ammunition From the United States to Pakistan

August 9, 2001

Presidential Determination No. 2001-23

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiver of Sanctions for the Export of Select U.S. Munitions List U.S.-Origin Helicopter and Armored Personnel Carrier Spare Parts and Ammunition from the United States to Pakistan

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President of the United States, and consistent with Title IX of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2000 (Public Law 106-79), I hereby waive the application of the restrictions contained in sections 101 and 102 of the Arms Export Control Act, as they have been applied under the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, and determine and certify to the Congress that the application of such restrictions would not be in the national security interests of the United States:

With respect to Pakistan, insofar as such restriction would otherwise apply to the sale of certain specified U.S.-origin helicopter and armored personnel carrier spare parts and ammunition to Pakistan for use in its deployment in Sierra Leone in support of UN peacekeeping operations.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination and certification to the appropriate committees of the Congress

and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 13.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Round of Golf in Meridian, Texas

August 13, 2001

Terrorist Attack in Israel

Q. How are you doing, sir?

The President. I'm doing great, thank you.

Q. What's your response to the suicide—

The President. I'll see you at the ranch—my response to what?

Q. The latest suicide bombing in Israel.

The President. Ask me at the ranch. We're going to have a little press avail after I sign the bill.

President's Round of Golf

Q. How's it going?

The President. Really good.

Q. How's your swing?

Q. No flaws?

The President. You saw it—needs a little work.

Q. Don't we all.

The President. I'm glad you asked who's winning the contest. Team sport.

Q. Is this a rematch?

The President. Yes, it is.

Q. And who won last time?

The President. Tie. If I hit every shot good, people would say I wasn't working. [Laughter]

Q. I thought the President always wins.

Terrorist Attack in Israel

The President. About time you learned something.

On Israel, the Palestinians—we will never get to Mitchell until the leadership works to reduce and stop violence. These terrorist acts, which are despicable, will prevent us from ever getting into the Mitchell process.

My administration has been calling upon all the leaders in the Middle East to do everything they can to stop the violence, to tell

the different parties involved that peace will never happen, and so long as terrorist activities continue, it will be impossible to get into Mitchell or any other discussion about peace under the threat of terrorism. Secretary Powell was in touch with Mr. Arafat and Mr. Sharon; we delivered that message consistently.

Q. What more do you think you can do?

The President. Well, Europe and moderate Arab nations must join with us to continue to send a consistent message that there will be no peace unless we break this cycle of violence. And the United States is doing everything in our power to convince the parties, but I want to remind people there must be the will. The people in the area must make the conscious decision to stop terrorism. And we're going to continue——

Q. But can the Israelis continue to show moderate restraint or——

The President. I appreciate the fact that they do show a moderate restraint. Sometimes they haven't, and sometimes they have. But what's important is that we say to all the parties that if there's a desire for peace—or at least a discussion of peace or the desire to get in Mitchell, the first thing that must happen is—is that we must stop violence.

Q. But do you have confidence in Arafat that he can stop the terrorist acts?

The President. I think he can do a lot more to be convincing the people on the street to stop these acts of terrorism and the acts of violence. I said in the Oval Office it is very important for Mr. Arafat to show a 100-percent effort, to do everything he can to convince the different parties on the West Bank and in Gaza to stop the violence. And we recognize that there could be isolated incidents of terror, but these—this is a continuing terrorist campaign, and we've got to stop. I will invite the respective parties to come and see me at the appropriate time.

Q. Sir, what about your response to people who say that your administration isn't doing enough to stop the escalation of violence there?

The President. We have been engaged in the Middle East ever since I got sworn in. Ours is the administration that sent George Tenet to the Middle East to lay out a plat-

form for discussions amongst security forces to bring peace to the region. We wholeheartedly endorse the Mitchell report. We have spent, on a near daily basis, talking to the different parties, urging them—because there's nothing that an administration can do if there's no will for peace.

And we're obviously working with the leaders to try to convince them to take the necessary steps to send a signal to the people on the streets that peace—we want peace. We want at least discussions towards peace, if not in a final agreement.

We've got a long way to go, I recognize that. And it's so important for there to be the will, the desire. It requires two parties to make the conscious decision that we're going to do everything we can to stop terrorism, and our administration and my Government is working hard to send that message. We're on the phone almost on a daily basis to the respective parties.

Q. Do you see the will on either side, sir?

The President. Well, sometimes we see the will on the other side, and sometimes that cycle overcomes the will. There's a lot of people in the Middle East who are desirous to get into the Mitchell process, but first things first. These terrorist acts and the responses have got to end in order for us to get the framework—the groundwork, not framework—the groundwork to discuss a framework, to lay the—all right.

Q. Have you made any calls yourself, sir?

The President. I've made a lot of calls over—you mean the last couple of days? No, I haven't, not over the last couple of days. Secretary Powell did—I'm, of course, very aware of how the conversations went.

NOTE: The exchange began at 8:53 a.m. at the Bosque Valley Golf Club. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. The President also referred to the Report by the Sharm al-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, which was chaired by former Senator George J. Mitchell. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Signing Agriculture Economic Assistance Legislation in Crawford, Texas

August 13, 2001

Please be seated. Thanks. I want to thank you all for coming. And I have the honor of signing a piece of legislation that was passed out of the House and the Senate in record time. It's a piece of legislation to provide economic assistance to the ag communities all across America. It's \$5.5 billion in total. This money is on top of the monies in the 2001 farm bill. And it's necessary. It's necessary for our ranchers and our farmers.

First, I want to thank my neighbors for coming. This is, I guess, maybe the first bill signing ceremony ever in Crawford, Texas. *[Laughter]* I don't think it will be the last. It's a meaningful piece of legislation for this part of the country because a lot of people make their living on the farm and on the ranch. And we want our families to be on the farms and ranch. After all, farm families represent the best of America. They represent the values that have made this country unique and different: values of love of family; values of respect for nature—I always tell people that every day is Earth Day when you own your farm, when you're working the land—values in understanding that there's some things beyond our control, that the Almighty controls the weather, sometimes in ways we like, and sometimes in ways we don't like; values of hard work; values of the entrepreneurial spirit; and values of private property. These are really important values that make America different and America unique, and values that we need to keep intact.

I'm worried about the fact that the ag economy suffers, because agriculture is a part of our national security mix. If we can't grow enough food to feed our people, we've got a problem. It will complicate our foreign policy, needless to say. Well, we've got to make sure our ag economy stays strong and healthy, and this supplemental is a way to help do that.

And so I want to thank you all for coming. I was hoping it would start raining in the middle of this little talk—*[laughter]*—and then I could take credit for it.

I think one of the things, as well, that I really appreciate about the Crawford area is the fact that there is a concept of neighborliness. People say, well—I go downtown, and I have a nice burger the other day with some people, and they say—they walk up and say, "I'm your neighbor." That's an important concept for our country because a neighbor means more than just somebody living next door to somebody else. A neighbor means that there's somebody around willing to help somebody.

I tell people all the time that the great strength of this country is in the fact that we've got such loving and decent people all across America who, when they find a neighbor in need, are willing to help out, are willing to help that neighbor. And that doesn't require any Government law; you can't pass a law that says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," or, "You will be neighborly." That's because America is full of just such decent people.

And so I want to welcome my neighbors, and I want to thank you all for coming. And it is my honor now to sign this piece of meaningful legislation that should make the lives of the people who farm and the people who ranch much better off.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon at the Bush Ranch. H.R. 2213, approved August 13, was assigned Public Law No. 107-25.

Exchange With Reporters Following the Agriculture Economic Assistance Legislation Signing Ceremony in Crawford

August 13, 2001

Stem Cell Research/Macedonia

Q. Mr. President, some people in Congress are talking about passing legislation to allow stem cell research on embryos that are still in fertility clinics—

The President. I've said all I'm going to say for a while.

Q. Would you veto legislation like that?

The President. The statement I laid out is what I think is right for America. And any

piece of legislation that undermines what I think is right will be vetoed.

I don't know if you all know, but they signed a bill in Macedonia today, an agreement to work out the language, as well as the policing, and it's a good sign. But now they need to lay down their arms so we can implement the peace.

Visit of President Vladimir Putin of Russia

Q. Did you get any feedback from Mr. Rumsfeld's meeting with Mr. Putin?

The President. I haven't talked to him yet.

It's right here that Mr. Putin is going to come, right to Crawford, Texas, one of these days. I'm sure he'll love it.

Q. Where are they going to stay?

The President. We haven't worked out the logistics yet. [Laughter] Got any recommendations? Oh, where he's going to stay? He'll stay here. I thought you said where are "they" going to stay, meaning the thousand press that follow. [Laughter]

[At this point, there was a pause in the exchange.]

President's Vacation

Q. So what are you going to do for the rest of the day?

The President. Got a lot of friends coming in—and then get ready for my trip. Got some speeches to give tomorrow and Wednesday, in New Mexico. I've got to figure out what I'm going to say.

Stem Cell Research

Q. One more question on stem cells, if I may?

The President. You can ask it, but I've already answered it.

Q. Well, I'll ask and——

The President. I answered it Thursday night, when I gave an address to the Nation.

Q. But sir, since then, some pro-life activists have said that you're——

The President. You know something? I gave the statement I thought was right. I spent a lot of time on the subject. I laid out the policy I think is right for America, and I'm not going to change my mind. I'm the kind of person that when I make up my mind, I'm not going to change it.

There are going to—people have got all kinds of opinions. I gave mine, and I gave it to the country. And it's a policy that's well thought out. Understand that there's a moral issue—moral issue, plus there's a chance that we can save people's lives. And I've laid out the path to do that.

President's Nature Trail

Q. How did you scratch your arms up?

The President. You know, I'm glad you noticed that. [Laughter] Working. Working. No, brush.

Q. Nature trail?

The President. Got the nature trail. One of these days we need to take you back there, so you can see it. It's beautiful.

Q. I'm free today.

Q. I'd love to go back there.

The President. It's beautiful. You won't believe it. As a matter of fact, this place, when you head out that way, there's a lot of canyons and creeks in the middle fork. You saw some of it when we crossed today, what it looks like when you get up in there.

Q. What's the trail like? Is it a loop or——

The President. No, no. Oh, my running trail?

Q. No, no, the nature trail.

The President. Oh, the nature trail is just built up into this canyon, this box canyon that's got a big overhang so that when the water is running, it's like a waterfall. We built a pathway up in there so that it's accessible to a lot of people.

Q. Place to bring guests, to go running?

The President. You can't run. I mean, it's the end of a canyon. You can run down there, then you walk up in there, and it's beautiful.

Q. What does building a trail entail? I mean, are you pulling out trees or are you——

The President. No, no. It means just building—getting old telephone poles and lying them on the ground, then filling in the dirt so that you——

Q. So you have this sort of pathway?

The President. Pathway, it's a pathway is what it is.

Argentine Economy

Q. Mr. President, do you favor additional loans to Argentina?

The President. We're watching the Argentinean situation every single day. Larry Lindsey and Paul O'Neill and the appropriate folks are meeting on it every single day. And one of the things I said that I thought we could do—first of all, we sent John Taylor down there, and he met with President de la Rúa, had a very good visit.

He delivered our administration's message, which is, they've got to implement the reforms that they recently passed through their legislature. One of the things we—and so we're exploring all options as to how to make sure that the message goes out that we've got—that we're watching the situation very carefully, that we urge Argentina implement reforms. As they do so, they will gain the confidence not only of our country but of a lot of folks who are concerned about it.

I spoke to King Juan Carlos of Spain the other day. He is very concerned. Spain has got more at stake in Argentina than even the United States does. And I told him that we're watching it, and we're very careful about it. And our hope is that the Argentineans will earn the confidence of the investor community by making—by implementing the legislation they passed.

But we're keeping an open mind on all options.

Nomination for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Q. Any chance you might have an announcement for us soon on the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

The President. Last time I hinted about doing something, everybody got the wrong message, and some of the flock were led astray. [Laughter] So I'm not going to hint anymore.

Q. Thank you. [Laughter]

The President. I know none of you—it was no misinformation at all.

President's Vacation

Q. No, I was asking if you're missing Washington?

The President. Am I?

Q. Yes.

The President. You know, I like Washington a lot. But I also like here. I tried to

explain to the people that are following me around that this is my home. You know, some people say, "Well, this is a vacation spot." Actually, this is our house and home; this is where we will live.

And I'm the kind of person that really values home, and I like my house. And Laura loves it, as well. So we really enjoy being here.

But I've got a job to do. Once this period of time ends and once Congress starts heading back to Washington, I'll start heading back, myself. In the meantime, we're getting airborne tomorrow, as you know. We're going to Colorado and New Mexico, and I've got a few other trips—a couple of other trips.

Q. Hint? [Laughter]

The President. No more hints.

Q. I think that was a hint. [Laughter]

The President. But I'm going to be moving around some, and it's good. One of the things I'm doing is heralding the values of the heartland. You know, it's important for folks to get outside of Washington, DC.

Washington is a great town; it's got a lot going on. Obviously, there's a lot of action when the Congress is meeting. But the strength of the country is in our heartland. And tomorrow I'm going to be talking about character education—same in New Mexico. I'm also going to be talking about small-business ownership. Today I talked about the agricultural sector. It's what makes America great, and I think it's important for me to get out amongst the people as best as a President can.

American Values

Q. I don't mean to sound flip, but are those values that you like to extol less prevalent on the coast and more prevalent—

The President. No, not at all. Listen, the values are very prevalent throughout America. It's just that my house is not on the coast; my house is in Texas. I'm a Texan. This is where I was raised; this is where I'm going to retire; this is where I'll pass away, in Texas.

There's a lot of people, wonderful people that live on the coast of the country. They've got great family values; they care just as much about teaching children right from wrong as anybody else. California is one of the huge agricultural States. Don't get me

wrong; I happen to be here; this is where we're anchored.

To me, to be out on the land helps a President keep perspective. You know, I haven't been a President all that long, but I can assure you, perspective is important. Get used to it, because this is where I'm coming back to, as well.

Legislative Agenda

Q. Thinking of a telecommute, sir?

The President. Actually, we have that potential and have used it since I've been here, where I've gotten on a video conference with some of my staff, and it works great. But no, I need to be there in Washington, obviously. We've got enough of a staff here to keep me busy. But when Congress comes back, I'll be there ready to welcome them and encourage them to get moving on some legislation.

One piece of legislation they'll be working on is the new farm bill. Another piece of legislation they need to get moving is the education bill. We've got a great opportunity to get a faith-based initiative going. We got it out of the House and had a good meeting with Senator Lieberman and Senator Santorum on how to get the bill moving out of the Senate.

We got a Patients' Bill of Rights, finally, for the first time. It looks like we're making some progress on a Patients' Bill of Rights. It's going to be in conference when we get back, so we've got a lot of work to do, and I look forward to Congress getting the job done.

Q. Are you anticipating some battles with the Senate?

The President. Oh, I never anticipate battles. [Laughter] I'll stand my ground and do what I think is right. That's what the people elected me to do. I'm confident, if there is the willingness to work with the White House in the Senate, we'll get a lot done. If people go up there just wanting to fight, then not much will get done, but we've already had that period. It's time to get rid of that business, out of Washington, and let's have a spirit of cooperation.

I'm confident we'll get a lot done, and I believe we will. So I go back to Washington with a can-do attitude, that we can do a lot of good for the American people and at the

same time, by the way, make sure we've got a good budget that doesn't get busted by folks that feel compelled to appropriate beyond the confines of a budget.

Most Americans expect—when you set a budget, expect people to meet the budget. And that's what I'm going to expect, as the President. I'm going to say, "Look, you all come back, and here's your budget. Don't spend beyond the budget." That will help the country, that will help our economy recover, by the way, by showing some fiscal discipline.

I've got to go. I've given you a lot more than you deserve. [Laughter]

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:04 p.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, the President referred to President Fernando de la Rúa of Argentina. H.R. 2213, approved August 13, was assigned Public Law. No. 107-25. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on a Trail Tour and an Exchange With Reporters in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado August 14, 2001

The President. One of the things it's important for people to understand, that through good management of our forests we can prevent forest fires. I appreciate Secretary Norton's work on this. I want to thank you all for helping show America that we can do a better job of maintaining our natural resources.

We can thin these out and make them less prone to fire, and that's what we're going to see happen right now. I appreciate you giving me a chance to come by.

Superintendent Jones. And we're very proud of your support for the national parks.

The President. I'm a big supporter. We've got \$5 billion—nearly \$5 billion in the budget for 5 years to make sure these parks are accessible to all Americans. Fran is in charge of the national park system. She is very smart and capable.

Director Mainella. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Otherwise, you wouldn't have been named. [Laughter]

Director Mainella. Thank you. I knew that. [Laughter]

The President. But we're excited to be here. This is a beautiful part of the world. I'm not only going to talk about how to make sure we maintain our parks in a smart, capable way, like you're doing, but I'm also going to talk about the need to teach our children good lessons of character.

And one way—and there's no better place to do this—I want to thank the Y for inviting me here to herald a program. All kinds of communities have character around the country, and this is a unique community of character.

When I was a kid growing up, a lot of my buddies used to come up to Estes Park from Houston, Texas. I guess you've had families coming since 1909.

Superintendent Jones. Yes. And Texas still has a large membership here with us; we get a lot of Texans. We love them.

The President. That's good.

Superintendent Jones. In fact, after Colorado, Texas—

The President. I've never been here.

Q. To Estes Park?

The President. Never have, no. I can see why a lot of people come, though; it's beautiful.

Q. We can come more often, sir.

The President. See, he's been in Crawford, Texas. [Laughter] I'm not saying he's the biggest griper about the choice of where I go to work in the summer. He'll like it—get used to it. [Laughter]

Director Mainella. Do you know that you're the first President in almost 70 years to be here at Rocky Mountain National Park?

The President. I did not know that, Fran, thank you.

Director Mainella. And we really appreciate that. And it's really a statement of your commitment to our national park system.

The President. I am a big believer in the park system. We've got a lot of maintenance backlog, and we've got to take care of it. I know Fran has been doing—Gale, we're going to make a strong commitment to our parks. It's a really important part of the American scene.

Director Mainella. Thank you.

The President. And again, I want to emphasize the fact that through good forest management we can do a better job of con-

taining fire. And I know there are some in our country that want to just, you know, let the forests fall apart. We're not going to let that happen in this administration. We're going to maintain them, and we're going to make sure that, if there is a fire, it does as little damage as possible.

You're going to see a part of the strategy right here. Gale was with the western Governors this past week, and we've come up with a very good strategy. It enforces—reinforces our commitment to working with the States and the local jurisdictions to make sure we've got sound, smart environmental policy. Not all the wisdom in the world is in Washington, DC. [Laughter] Some in Washington think that, but not this administration.

We trust the local folks, and our Federal Government is going to pledge to stand side by side with local folks. This is a collaborative effort here we're going to see between the private sector and the public park system to maintain these forests in a good, sensible way.

So, Jesse, let's get to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Jesse Duhnkrack, fire management officer, Rocky Mountain National Park. Park Superintendent A. Durand Jones and National Park Service Director Frances P. Mainella participated in the exchange. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters in the Lunch Line at a YMCA Picnic in Rocky Mountain National Park

August 14, 2001

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, I've got a Mideast question for you. The Israeli tanks moved into a Palestinian city, the furthest incursion yet. Any new reaction to that?

The President. I have no new reaction. My only point is—and I'm going to continue to make the point and so is my administration—that the cycle of violence has got to end in order for the peace process, or any peace process, to begin.

And therefore, Mr. Arafat must clamp down on the suicide bombers and on the violence. And the Israelis must show restraint. We've got to break the cycle. In order for there to be any discussions about world peace, it requires a willingness of both sides to come to the table. And my administration continues to talk to both sides, and we will continue to work to try to bring a sense of—a desire, a sense of purpose on the partners there in the Middle East to sit down and, one, reject the violence and start meaningful discussions about how to reach an accord. It's essential that the violence stops.

Q. Sounds like a strongly held feeling.

The President. Well, I feel very strongly about it because I'm worried about the cycle of violence continuing to escalate. And it's not good for our—it's not good for that part of the world, nor is it good for the rest of the world, that the Middle East be a place of violence.

We've been making good progress in Macedonia, it looks like, so that part of the world is beginning to calm down a little bit.

The Middle East is a cauldron of violence, and we've got to—and we will continue to be very much involved in insisting that both parties break the cycle.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:05 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a YMCA Picnic in Rocky Mountain National Park

August 14, 2001

Thank you all very much. Tessa, thanks—a pretty tough act to follow. [*Laughter*]

First, I want to thank the Marich family for their patience working me through the food line. I'd worked up quite an appetite up top of the mountain, and I'm glad I got a little of that barbecue.

Thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank the directors of the Y for welcoming me to this little slice of heaven. You know, when I was growing up in Texas, a lot of people say, "You know, I spent my summer

in Estes Park," and now I know why. It's a beautiful spot, and thanks for having me.

I'm traveling with some folks that you might want to at least say hello to. I picked somebody from—to head the Department of the Interior who would understand the thinking of the West, who would understand that we can have good, sound environmental policy, that conservation is important.

And so when I named Gale Norton from the State of Colorado to be the head of the Department of Interior, a lot of folks came to realize this is an administration that's going to be wise, full of common sense when it comes to preserving the natural beauty of our country. And I'm so thankful Gale Norton is here. Where are you, Gale? Thank you for coming.

I also needed to find somebody to run our National Park Service, somebody who was bright and wise, as well, somebody who shared our commitment to making sure that at the very minimum, the maintenance backlog in these parks ought to be taken care of; that the parks are for the people; that when we just talk about a national park system that is an incredibly important part of our Nation's heritage and tradition, that the parks be accessible for the people who pay the bills; that they be well maintained.

We've got \$5 billion in the budget, for the next 5 years, to end this maintenance backlog, and the person who is going to work with us to do so is the National Park Service Director, Fran Mainella. Thank you, Fran. And I want to thank all the Park Service employees who are here. You've got a tough job and an important job, and we probably don't thank you enough for the work you do. But I want to thank you.

It's great to travel up on the trail and see the wise public policy being deployed here: public policy to make sure that we reduce the hazards of forest fires; smart management of our lands; wise, commonsense approach to how we thin out our forests, prevent the hazards of forest fire; and the Park employees were up there working, along with the volunteers from the Y camp. I also loved meeting the folks making the trails so that the American people can access this beautiful part of the world. So on behalf of the taxpayers of our country and the administration,

I want to thank all the Park Service employees for your good work.

Also traveling with me today is the Governor of this great State, a man who has fulfilled every promise he made, and that's my friend Bill Owens. Thank you for coming, Bill. And the Lieutenant Governor is somewhere—hey, Joe, thank you—Lieutenant Governor Rogers is here, as well. Thank you for being here. Two fine United States Senators, Wayne Allard and Ben Nighthorse Campbell, are here; the Congressman from this district, Bob Schaffer, is here. Bob, where are you? There he is. *[Laughter]* And Tom Tancredo, the other Congressman—thank you all for coming.

We are making some progress in Washington, starting with changing the tone of the Nation's Capital. Like a lot of citizens around our country, I was deeply concerned about the bitterness that seemed to be in every other voice in the Nation's Capital. And one of the things I pledged to do was to at least try to change the tone, try to say if you don't happen to agree with somebody, you can disagree in an agreeable way, that party is important, but it's not paramount—what's more important is the country.

And I believe we're making good progress. We've come together and have done some smart things on behalf of the American people. I think one of the smartest things we did was cut the taxes, to get people their money back. I appreciate all the signs I saw coming in, where people said, thanks for the \$600. *[Laughter]* But guess what? It wasn't mine to give out; it was theirs to begin with.

So it's important. We've got a wise budget; we've got a good budget, a good, sound fiscal policy. We're working hard on getting an education bill out that makes sense.

We're sending a clear message overseas, that ours is a proud nation that will promote the peace. But we're not going to sign on to every single agreement that somebody thought might have been good. We're going to stand tall for freedom and America, that what's good for America is going to be paramount to my way of thinking.

I think we're making good progress explaining to our allies that we'll be loyal friends, but we can't be all things to all people. I hope we're breaking new ground when

it comes to Mr. Putin, welcoming him to the West, saying to him that the old days of mistrust, aiming missiles at each other have got to end. The cold war is over. It's finally over, and now it's time to have a new strategic thinking about how to keep the peace. So we're making good progress.

But there's a role bigger than just initiatives and legislation for a President in an administration. And it's really to herald, to capture the spirit of the country. That's why I'm so thankful that Dave Thomas has invited me here, to let me come, and the staff, because the spirit of the country is reflected, in my judgment, right here in this beautiful setting.

The spirit of America is found in the character of our citizens, the value base that makes America, I think, such a different kind of place—a place that—a country that values family and friendship, a place where people learn values and character. One of the things that—when I try to describe America to somebody who has never been here I say, “We're a country stitched together by communities of character.”

This is a community of character, as far as I'm concerned. Not only does it exist in a beautiful setting—and I can see why families have wanted to come back year after year after year—but there's also a grand vision embodied in these mountains. And the vision is that we can teach our children right from wrong. And we can teach them good, sound values, so that when they get older they'll make the right choices in their life.

We can teach our children values that will make an enormous difference for our country as a whole, the values of respect: respect the land; respect somebody with whom you may not agree; respect your neighbor, regardless of where they were raised or where they were born; respect somebody else's religious views; be willing to listen. It's an important value to make our country so different and so unique, a country that's been able to absorb people from all walks of life under the great umbrella of freedom and opportunity.

There is also a respect out here, respect for family. I was up there when I was helping clear the trail, somebody said they were from Fredericksburg, Texas, which reminded me of a story, a true story that happened to me.

I was there, as Governor of Texas, for the 50th anniversary at the end of the war in the Pacific Theater. And my mother and dad were there, as was Laura, my wife. And I got up to speak, to welcome everybody as the Governor, and I said, "Welcome." And I said, "Dad, welcome back to central Texas," and people cheered. And I said, "Mother," and before I could say another word, everybody was screaming at the top of their lungs. And I said, "Mother,"—and still—"everybody here loves you in Texas and so do I, but you are still telling me what to do after 50 years." [Laughter] And a guy in a big cowboy hat steps out in the middle of Main Street, Fredericksburg, and screams, "You better listen to her, too, boy." [Laughter]

Part of respect is to respect your mom and dad. So to the campers here, my advice is, listen to your mother. [Laughter] In my case, I don't have any choice. [Laughter]

You also teach the sense of responsibility, that each of us must be responsible for the decisions we make in life. And that's a really important character and core value for our country. That we must have a responsible society, that Government can't do everything in a society. We've got to be responsible for loving a neighbor like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

One of the things that I'm hoping to get through the Congress is the faith-based initiative, faith and community based initiative which will capture and stand side by side the programs all around America that rely upon faith to help change people's lives.

I recognize there is a role for Government-sponsored programs, but our society must recognize there is also a role for faith-based initiatives and faith-based programs, programs that exist to help people change their heart and, therefore, change their behavior. We shouldn't fear faith in America; we ought to welcome the faith-based programs that help define our country as a unique land. And so, responsible society is one that we all must aim for.

Now, this is a nation of character and values, and I'm so honored to be in a place that teaches values, that heralds character, that's not afraid to say there are right choices in life to make and wrong choices in life to make; a community of conscious and a com-

munity of character that aims to say to our young, this American experience is a fantastic experience. Work hard, study hard, respect your family, and respect your friends, and our Nation will be even greater than it is today.

So thank you for giving me a chance to come and herald a wonderful program in an unbelievably beautiful setting. It's a great honor to be the President of this country. And the main reason why is because our country is the greatest there is. And the reason why we are is because the people of America are so fantastic and so loving and so decent.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Tessa Murphy, camp counselor, Estes Park Center YMCA, who introduced the President; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and David G. Thomas, executive director, YMCA of the Rockies.

Statement Following a Telephone Conversation With President Boris Trajkovski of Macedonia

August 14, 2001

This morning I spoke with my friend President Boris Trajkovski to congratulate him on his courage and leadership in negotiating the political settlement that was signed yesterday in Macedonia.

The settlement promises to strengthen democracy and avert civil war, while protecting Macedonia's territorial integrity and political unity. It addresses longstanding political aspirations of the citizens of Macedonia. It is now up to Macedonia's Assembly to adopt the constitutional amendments and legislation to implement the settlement.

As I have made clear from the outset of the fighting, the United States stands strongly against those armed extremists who have tried to take democracy hostage in Macedonia. President Trajkovski and I agree that their tactics are despicable and their methods undemocratic. The time has come for these armed groups to turn over their weapons to NATO and disband.

A political settlement has been signed, and we now need to ensure the peace and put

Macedonia back on the road to Europe. The United States offers its strong support to President Trajkovski and to the democratic Government of Macedonia as they move forward to achieve this goal.

Remarks at a Fundraising Dinner for Senator Wayne Allard and Governor Bill Owens in Denver, Colorado

August 14, 2001

Thank you, all. Thank you very much. Thank you all very much. Okay, sit down, please. Thank you, all.

Madame Secretary, thank you for that kind introduction. You read it just like I wrote it. [*Laughter*] I'm really proud of my appointment of Gale Norton to the Secretary of the Interior. She is doing a fabulous job.

I think one of the things that people are going to find about our administration is we bring some common sense to Washington, DC. And Gale Norton brings a lot of common sense—common sense—to the Interior Department. And it needed a little common sense. [*Laughter*]

I'm sorry my wife isn't with me, but I want to give you a family report. I'm extremely proud of our First Lady. She's doing a fabulous job. She's working on a reading initiative that will have a profound impact all across America. Right now she's worrying about the two dogs and the cat on our ranch in Crawford, Texas.

We love our ranch in Crawford, Texas. But I must say, after having been in Estes Park—[*laughter*—it's good to get out of Washington. [*Laughter*] I love my job. I want to thank all of you here who helped me become the President. It's a huge honor. But it's also a—and I like going to the Oval Office every day. As you can imagine, walking into this great office is—it's hard to describe how I feel every morning.

But it's also important to get out and see the people, too. It's important to keep balance and perspective. We find that on our ranch in central Texas, and I find it as I travel the heartland. No better place to come than the great State of Colorado, where people are down-to-earth and work hard and adhere to great American values. And I want to

thank you for the warm welcome I've received today.

I appreciate so very much traveling today with United States Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell. He is a—he is an interesting man—[*laughter*—who I'm proud to call friend. He brings a lot of class to the United States Senate, and he represents your State with a lot of dignity.

I want to thank the Members of the Congressional delegation who are here, as well: Scott McInnis, who just came off Mount McKinley today to say hello to his President. And I want to thank you, Scott. I traveled today with Tom Tancredo and Bob Schaffer, as well. Both of these men—all three of these men are good, solid citizens in the United States Congress, and I appreciate their friendship. I appreciate their advice. I get a lot of advice from Members of Congress these days. [*Laughter*] Most of all, I appreciate their votes. Thank you all for being here.

I want to thank my friend, Joe Rogers, the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Colorado, for being here. Thank you, Joe. And Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership. Where is he? There he is, down there. I appreciate you taking on the lead. I appreciate you toiling in the trenches. I appreciate you make sure Colorado remains in the public—Republican camp in 2002.

I'm here to help two good men get re-elected, and I appreciate you all's work helping them get reelected. There's no finer Governor in the United States than Bill Owens. Jeb Bush isn't all that bad. [*Laughter*] But he's done a great job. He is the kind of fellow you want in office because he does what he says he's going to do.

That sounds pretty simple to people from the outside, but a lot of times in the political process, that's not the way it works. A lot of times, you have candidates running for office who say one thing, and they don't mean it. They go out and tell the people all across the State that they're going to do something for education, but they really don't mean it, or they can't get it done.

This is a man who has done in office what he said he would do. He's cut the taxes, he's made education a priority, and you need to send him back. You need to put him back

in the statehouse. Plus, he married well. *[Laughter]* Frances is a great First Lady for the State of Colorado.

Bill is going to work hard; I know. And he's going to run on a positive agenda; that's what the people want. He told me today on the airplane that although he's done a lot for education, he's going to continue to stay on education. And we're going to help him with a good bill out of Washington, DC, that will give more power and flexibility to the States. Education is his priority, and it needs to be his priority. It's the people's priority of the State of Colorado.

And I'm proud to stand up here for Wayne, as well. He's a good man. He works hard, and I need him in the Senate. I need somebody who I can count on in the United States Senate.

And Colorado needs him in the Senate. Colorado needs a man who understands natural resources and who brings balance to the issue. Colorado needs a man who understands energy. Colorado needs a fiscal conservative in the United States Senate. Colorado needs a commonsense man, and that man is Wayne Allard.

Let me say one other thing. It's much better to have two United States Senators who will have their phone call returned from the White House than one. *[Laughter]* It's much better to have two people working on the State's business, who can work closely with an administration. It's important to have somebody who is an ally in the Oval Office, to represent your State. And I view Wayne as an ally, and I think he views me as an ally of Colorado. That's important.

And the voters of Colorado have got to understand the practical aspects of how Washington works. And it's going to work a lot better for Colorado when you send Wayne Allard back to the United States Senate.

We're getting a lot done in the Nation's Capital. I can remember watching Washington in the so-called days of gridlock, and the anger and the finger-pointing, and say, we can do better than that. This great land of ours needs a Government that is more willing to listen, more respectful tone, so that when people are coming up in our system, they're not discouraged by what they see.

Democracy depends upon our citizenry becoming involved. It means that those of us who have been entrusted with power must set a good tone and a good example. And we're beginning to get that done in Washington. Oh, there is still some name-calling and some finger-pointing and some gnashing of teeth, but it's getting better.

And one reason it's getting better is because we're getting some things done, starting with a meaningful, real tax cut for the American people. I can remember in the course of the campaign people would say, "Well, he's just saying it. He doesn't mean that." But it's reality, and it needed to be reality, because our economy began to slow down. And one of the things a commonsense administration does is solve problems.

And one way you solve the problem of an economic slowdown is give people some of their money back. That's called good, sound fiscal policy.

Today, when we were riding on the road up to Estes Park, I was so proud to see a lot of citizens holding that sign up saying, "Thanks for the \$600, Mr. President." But you know what? It wasn't my \$600 to give. It was their money in the first place.

I think we're finally making the point in Washington that the so-called surplus is not the Government's money; it is the people's money. And when we've got too much of it in Washington, we're going to send it back to the people who pay the bills.

And I want to thank Wayne for his help on repealing the estate tax. That tax was punitive; it's unnecessary; and we're finally going to get rid of it in the Tax Code of the United States.

You hear a lot of them talking in Washington about, "Oh, the tax cut might cause a deficit." No. What causes a deficit is too much spending. And we've got a good budget in place, and I expect the United States Congress to adhere to the budget we have in place. And if they try to over-spend—I know none of the Members up here will—but I can assure you, when we get back this fall, if they try to bust the budget, you'll have a President who will veto those budget-busting bills.

There's a new day in Washington, DC. It used to be they'd have a bidding contest to

see who could get out of town first. Those days are over. We've set a responsible budget, passed by both the House and the Senate. And I expect members of both political parties to adhere to that budget. It's the best way to make sure our economy recovers—sending money back to the taxpayers and having fiscal sanity in the halls of Government in Washington, DC.

We passed an education bill that was one of my top priorities. It's a bill that's going to make our schools better. It's a bill that gives more flexibility at the local level. It consolidates programs. But it also does something that you've done here in Colorado: It challenges the soft bigotry of low expectations. It says, every child can learn. And we believe that we must measure to determine whether or not every child is learning.

This piece of Federal legislation says, for the first time, if you take any Federal money, you, the State, must measure; you must show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if they are, there will be ample praise, but if not, we will not stand idly by. We will not continue to fund failure. There are no second-rate children in America, and there are no second-rate dreams, as far as this administration is concerned.

Oh, I've heard all the complaints about testing. They say, "There's too much Government if you test." But we're results-oriented people. We expect there to be a return on taxpayers' money. We want to know, if we're spending money on the schools out of Washington, DC, or you're spending money on the schools out of Colorado—it seems like it makes sense to ask the question, what are the results?

And then they say, "If you test, it's racist." Folks, let me tell you something as plainly as I can: It's racist not to test. It's so much easier to quit on inner-city black kids or kids whose parents may not speak English as their first language. It's so much easier to shuffle them through the system. But those days are gone, as far as this President is concerned. I want every child to learn to read and write and add and subtract.

I believe every child can learn in America. And it starts with teaching every child to read. And that's exactly what we're going to

start doing in America. We're going to ask the Governors, like Owens, to have a reading program based upon sound science, not based upon some feel-good curriculum but based upon what works. Phonics works, by the way, and it needs to be integrated into the reading programs all across America.

Ours is the first administration to put out an energy plan. And we needed an energy plan. I called upon our good Vice President—and by the way, his health is strong, and he's a fabulous Vice President of the United States. He comes from right around the corner, Wyoming. And as he likes to say, who thought those three electoral votes weren't important? [*Laughter*]

But we've developed an energy policy that makes sense for America. On the one hand, it says, we can do a better job of conserving our resources, and we must. We must use the new technologies available, or becoming available, to make better use of scarce supply of energy.

One of the interesting initiatives we've taken in Washington, DC, is we've got these vampire-busting devices. A vampire is a—a cell deal you can plug in the wall to charge your cell phone. And when your cell phone is not on the charger, even though the charger is plugged in, it's still eating electricity. So some smart person came along and developed a cell phone charger that doesn't eat electricity when the cell phone is not plugged in.

And so our Federal Government is going to start using these devices to set the example, to show that we can be good stewards of our Nation's energy. All of us must do a better job. But make no mistake about it, we need more supply, as well.

The State of California leads our Nation when it comes to conservation measures. But they ran out of energy. They're building 12 energy—12 powerplants, and that's good, and we helped to expedite the process to get the 12 powerplants built. But those 12 powerplants are going to be powered by natural gas, and this Nation better have an administration that starts asking, "Where's that gas going to come from if they're going to power the powerplants?" We need more supply available for American consumers, as well.

There's a lot of people who don't have faith in our technology in America. I have faith in technology. And like many of you in the energy sector, you know we can go into parts of Alaska and drill for natural gas, for precious natural gas, without destroying the environment. It's time to have a commonsense energy policy for the United States of America.

Ours is an administration that told our United States military that we would help them remain strong. And it starts with paying our troops better, and we have. The budgets we submitted increased pay, helped on health insurance, and improved the housing of the men and women who wear the uniform. And we're going to do so in the 2002 budget, as well.

But this is an administration who is not going to needlessly spend money. We want to spend money on a clear, strategic vision. We want our military to be a military not only that can keep the peace today but a military ready to keep the peace tomorrow. And so I've asked Secretary Rumsfeld to prepare a strategic vision for what our military ought to look like, so when we spend taxpayers' money, we spend it wisely.

And along those lines, I appreciate the support of the Members up here who recognize what I recognize, that the cold war is over. It's time to discard the treaties that codified the cold war and to develop a new strategic relationship with a country like Russia, so we can more ably keep the peace. Russia is no longer our enemy. The cold war no longer exists. The enemies that the United States face are terrorists, rogue nations that will develop weapons of mass destruction and point them at us or our allies, cyberterrorists.

And our defenses must reflect the true threats facing us. So that's why I was proud to represent our Nation in sitting down with the Russian President. And I told him, I said, "Mr. President, you're not our enemy and, therefore, we need to get rid of the ABM Treaty. We need to have a new way of thinking, a way that will allow a peaceful nation like the United States to develop the necessary defenses to protect our people, our allies, our friends all around the world."

It's time to think differently about the defense of the United States of America. There

are some at this table who—all at this table who support me, but some in the United States Senate are nervous about getting rid of the relics of the cold war. And I don't agree with them. I don't agree with them.

And the reason I don't is because I understand the intention of America. We love the peace. We're a nation that relies upon strength to keep the peace. We're a nation that says we can develop the technologies necessary to make the entire world more peaceful. It's my pledge to the American people; it's my pledge to our allies overseas; and it's a pledge I intend to keep.

We're making progress on what they call a Patients' Bill of Rights—it recognizes that patients need to be more empowered when it comes to making choices in the medical field. I say we're making progress because there needs to be balance in the law. It's important to give our docs and patients more opportunity to interface, and the law will.

But we cannot allow lawsuits to drive up the cost of medicine, that will force people out of health insurance. There are too many people uninsured in America today.

I think we can get a good bill out of the conference committee. We got one good bill already out of the House, a not-so-good bill out of the Senate. I'm hopeful that we can come together and get a good bill that I can sign, that will bring balance to health care.

And, finally, we're making great progress in Washington, DC, on a very important initiative. It's called the Faith-Based and Community Development Initiative. It's an initiative that really takes welfare a step beyond where we are today.

First of all, we recognize there are lot of people hurt in America, people who have lost hope and faith in our country, people who don't believe the American Dream was meant for them, people hooked on drugs and are destitute. We should never give up on those folks in our country. We're a compassionate nation, and we're a wealthy nation, and we ought to focus our resources and compassion so it helps.

But Governments can't make people love one another. I wish we could—I'd sign the law. Allard would sponsor it, Nighthorse would vote for it, and I would sign it. But the good news is, we are a loving nation.

There's a lot of people who have heard the call to love their neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

We're a nation, the fabric of which is created by little communities of conscience all over America. I was at one today, at the YMCA camp in Estes Park, a place where they teach children right from wrong by teaching values. There are drug treatment programs all across our country who rely upon faith. They change a person's heart, and that person changes their lives.

We've got prison ministries that are helping prisoners find the walk. We've got all kinds of faith-based initiatives that are literally changing our country one heart, one soul, one conscious at a time. And the Federal Government must not fear faith-based programs in America. We must empower them. We must welcome them into all neighborhoods, to make sure the American Dream reaches across every neighborhood.

My dream for America is to usher in a period of personal responsibility, a culture that rejects the old times that said, if it feels good, do it, and if you've got a problem, blame somebody else. I believe there's a better culture for the country. It's one that says each of us must be responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you're a mom or a dad, you're responsible for your child. The most important job you'll ever have is to love your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're a neighbor—got a neighbor in need, it's up to you, not your Government, to help the neighbor in need. Be responsible with our environment, responsible by supporting teachers in the school system. Be a responsible citizen.

But it starts with having responsible leadership. And that's why I'm so proud to stand and represent and urge for the reelection of Wayne Allard and Bill Owens, who are responsible citizens, who bring dignity and honor to the offices to which they have been elected.

It's an honor to be here. May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:41 p.m. in the Plaza Ballroom at the Adam's Mark Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Bob Beauprez, State chairman, Republican State Central Committee

of Colorado; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Exchange With Reporters at Griegos Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 15, 2001

Situation in the Middle East

Q. One question about the Middle East, sir. Do you believe that they are on the brink of war there? And have you come to believe that it's no longer realistic—

The President. [*Inaudible*]*—*the violence in the Middle East, but I'm confident that the leadership there will understand that war is avoidable and will work to bring peace. The parties must—must—make up their mind that peace is preferable to war. The suicide bombings have increased; there's too many of them. And Mr. Arafat must do everything in his power to discourage the suicide bombers. And the Israelis must be restrained in their response.

There's too much violence in the Middle East, but I'm confident that we can avoid war so long as the leadership makes the concerted effort to do so. My administration is constantly in touch with the parties. I spoke to Secretary Powell this morning. We're working with the appropriate folks. The Egyptians are in town. Not only are we talking to the Palestinians and the Israelis, we're talking to other nations in the neighborhood to encourage them to convince Mr. Arafat to do everything he can to prevent and stop suicide bombings and needless violence.

Congratulations, Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News]. You actually got me to say something. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:40 a.m. in room 117. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at Griegos Elementary School in Albuquerque

August 15, 2001

The President. Thank you for the warm greeting. It's an honor to be here on the first day of school. I can remember—I think I can still remember the excitement I felt when I was—the first day of school as a first-grader at Sam Houston Elementary School in Midland, Texas. At least I felt—I felt the energy of the kids, and I kind of could relate to it. And I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come.

I want you to know that the idea of coming here was Heather Wilson's. We were sitting around the Cabinet Room at the—right outside the Oval Office, and she said, "I understand you're thinking about coming to New Mexico." I said, "You bet. I used to spend a lot of time there when I was living in Midland, Texas. I think that's exactly where I intend to go during my stay out of Washington." She said, "Well, if you come to Albuquerque, you better make sure you go to a school, and I've got a good one in mind." And I said, "Yes, ma'am." [*Laughter*] Here I am. It shows what kind of influence she has as a Congressperson representing the great folks of Albuquerque, New Mexico. And I want to thank Heather for her service and for her recommendation.

I'm also really thrilled to be here with the two United States Senators from the State of New Mexico, Pete Domenici and Jeff Bingaman, both of them fine Americans. I want to thank the Lieutenant Governor, who is here. Lieutenant Governor Walter Bradley is representing the State officials, and I want to thank you for being here, Walter, as well.

I want to thank—I made a pretty darn good pick when I asked Rod Paige to come to Washington, DC, from Houston, Texas, to become the Secretary of Education. I picked Rod for a reason, and I think Brad Allison, the superintendent of schools here, will understand why. I wanted somebody who had been in the trenches of public schools, somebody who had been on the front line of insisting upon excellence for every single child, not somebody who had read it in a textbook or somebody who was

a theorist but a hands-on Secretary of Education who had cut his teeth in making sure that all children, not just a handful of children but every child in the school district, received a good education. And Rod Paige did just that as the superintendent of the Houston Independent School District. He's going to make a great Secretary of Education.

I was very impressed by Brad Allison's comments to me when I walked in. Sometimes people, when they meet the President, get a little tongue-tied. Not Brad. [*Laughter*] He said, "I want you to know, Mr. President, our school district is committed to two things, excellence in academics for every child and strong character education for every child." He understands that the two go hand in hand; that a complete child is one that not only learns how to read and write and add and subtract but a child who also learns the difference between right and wrong. And I applaud that holistic approach to education, Brad, and thank you for your leadership.

And I want to thank Eddie Lucero, too, the principal of the school. One of the things you learn when you spend a lot of time on public education, like I have done as the Governor of Texas and now doing as the President, that the quality of education in a particular school really depends upon the entrepreneurial spirit of the principal.

You've got a fine principal here. You know how I know? You've got an accountability system that tells us that's the case. We're not guessing in New Mexico whether or not children are learning to read. We know, because your State is bold enough to adapt a policy that says, show us whether or not the children are learning before any child gets left behind.

I just came from a second grade class. I want to thank Gloria—is she here, the second grade teacher? She is there. Gloria, thank you for your hospitality. Obviously, she has inherited on the first day of school a group of former first graders who were well-trained in reading. These kids are way beyond "The Hungry Caterpillar," let me put it to you that way. [*Laughter*] They read it better than the President could read it. [*Laughter*]

But I was very impressed. And I want to thank Gloria, but I also want to thank all the teachers, the teachers here in Albuquerque,

the teachers all across New Mexico and the country, for taking on a very important profession.

We can never thank our teachers enough. One of the things my wife is doing—and by the way, I'm sorry she's not here. She is—you would find her to be an articulate advocate for making sure every child learns to read. After all, she was the public school librarian when I married her. She also is going to spend a lot of time encouraging people to become teachers, encouraging the young to become teachers, encouraging those, for example, who have spent time in the military to take advantage of the Troops for Teachers program that we have worked with Pete and Jeff on to fund, to encourage people to get back into the classroom, to make sure that our kids have got the very best instruction possible.

I want to thank the teachers. I also want to thank the parents here. The truth of the matter is, you're the first teacher for every child. It's important for all of us who have been fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad to remember the most important job we will ever have is to love our children with all our hearts and all our souls. The most important job a mom or dad will ever have is to make sure your child is healthy, well treated, and well educated.

Good education starts in the living rooms of the citizens of this country. It starts with a mom or a dad saying, "You turn off the TV and practice reading." It means, get rid of the tube and get into the books. That's where it starts, and I know that's hard. After all, Laura and I raised twins, and they struggled to get that TV on. But we spent a lot of time reading to them early and insisting that they practice reading as they came up. And that's so important for a mom or a dad to realize that.

And after all, reading is the foundation of a good education. I'll never forget our friend, Rod, and my friend Phyllis Hunter of Houston, Texas. She said, "Reading is the new civil right." I want you to think about that concept. Reading is the new civil right. Reading is the capacity for some child whose parents may not speak English as a first language to be able to succeed in America. If your child

can read, your child can learn, and we want every child to learn.

The question I like to ask every child I visit in the classroom is, "Are you going to college?" In this great country, we expect every child, regardless of how he or she is raised, to go to college. That's a goal we want every child to have. And it starts with making sure every single child can read.

And so one of the things we've done is promoted a reading initiative based upon the science of reading, the sound science of what works. Laura recently hosted a big seminar in Washington, DC, bringing in folks who understand how to connect the brain to the words on the page. There's a science to reading. We found in my State that phonics needs to be an integral part of a reading curriculum to make sure every single child learns to read.

And one of the things we're doing, as we're working with Pete on our budget, is we're tripling the amount of dollars available for reading programs all around the country, to help districts develop diagnostic tools and determine what little children need help early, before it's too late; to make sure our teachers are properly trained in how to teach reading; and to make sure there's intervention programs available if a child needs extra help.

Reading is the whole basis for a good education system. And I want to applaud this school and your principals and your teachers for recognizing that and insisting that every child learn to read. I want you to understand, I said "every child." I didn't say "just a handful of children." I didn't say "only those whose parents may make a certain income." I mean every single child, because, you see, I believe—and I know many of you all believe—that every child can read in America.

We must challenge what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. We must make sure the mindset that says certain children can't learn to read is eradicated all across America. See, it's so much easier to walk into a classroom of tough-to-educate children and say, "We'll just move you through. That's the easiest path." And guess who gets hurt the most when that happens? Guess who gets affected the most in a system that has no accountability as its cornerstone? It's the children, the so-called hard-to-educate, because it's easier to quit.

And one of the ways to make sure we never quit is, one, for the Federal Government to help, which we will do in reading programs. And by the way, I'm proud to announce, Mr. Superintendent, that Rod Paige and my administration has worked up a grant of \$6 million, a 3-year grant to the Albuquerque school system for the magnet school programs in your school districts.

No, we can help. And the cornerstone of the education bill that is still in the conference—and I'm confident the Members will work hard to get it out of conference so I can sign it, sooner rather than later—but one of the cornerstones of the bill says that we're going to hold people accountable for results.

I love coming into a school district where I hear the superintendent and the principals say, "Go ahead and measure us. We're confident that we've got the right curriculum. We're confident we've got the best teachers possible. We're confident that we're teaching our children the skills necessary to become productive citizens."

It's those school districts and States I get a little nervous about that say, "We don't want any accountability." You see, that, to me, seems like an excuse to mask failure. We can't mask failure anymore in America. Every child is too precious. And so the cornerstone says—of reform—says, the States and local jurisdictions will develop the accountability systems to let us know.

And we want to know. Moms and dads need to know. You need to know whether your children are learning to read, early. And if they're not, we've got to make sure they do. You need to know the results. We shouldn't fear accountability in America. We ought to welcome accountability. We're a results-oriented society, and when we find results that are satisfactory, we'll praise them. But when we find children trapped into schools that won't teach and won't change, we've got to insist upon something else.

I refuse to relent. I've heard all the arguments about accountability. "Oh, it's too much Government," they argue. Wait a minute. If we're spending taxpayers' money, if we're spending the hard-earned money of people—the money of people, hard-working people—we want to know, don't we?

Shouldn't we insist upon results if we're putting taxes into the coffers of the school system? Yes, of course.

And then you hear people say, "It's racist to test." Do you know what I think? I think it's racist not to test. I think it basically says—I think that attitude basically says, "Hey, some kids can't learn. So let's don't test. Let's don't find the truth." We need to know the truth, and when we find the truth, I can assure you what's going to happen: Where reform is needed, reform will happen.

There's nothing better to get parents involved in schools than to measure and report the results. There's nothing better than to have public report cards on accountability, so a mom or dad can know exactly where the school stands or where the children stand within a school.

A lot of us discussed the need to get parents more involved, and you bet, every teacher wants parents involved. They know it will make their job better. But when there's success, a parent will be involved to thank the teachers. And when we're not doing as well as we should be, the parents will be involved, because every child is precious in a parent's eyes.

We're making good progress around America. School districts like yours, Mr. Superintendent, are leading the way. You're showing them what can be done. I want to thank the school board members who are here. And I want to assure you, although we bring Washington rhetoric to Albuquerque, we believe in local control of schools in Washington. We believe in empowering the local people.

We know one size does not fit all when it comes to education. I can assure you that the Albuquerque school district is different from the Rhode Island school districts, for example. And therefore, we need to have more flexibility when it comes to Federal law. So one of the cornerstones of the reform package is going to be to consolidate Federal programs and entrust local people to make the right decisions on how to apply that money.

We're making good progress. We're making good progress challenging the status quo. And that's important, because every child is precious. And so, rather than ending my

speech here, what I thought I would do is maybe answer some questions, if you might have any, starting with the students, and if not the students, maybe the parents, and if not the parents, maybe the Senators. [Laughter] No, forget that. I'm on my vacation. I've been answering questions from Senators for—[laughter].

Anybody got any questions—any of the students? Yes, ma'am.

Medicare

Q. Are you going to try to do anything for the older people?

The President. Am I going to—I can't hear you very well.

Q. Are you going to try to do anything for the olderly (sic) people?

The President. The older people? "Olderly people?" [Laughter] Well, the first thing we're going to do is, we're going to make sure we've got a health care system that meets their needs. We're going to make sure that Medicare—[applause]. And we're beginning to work on a Medicare package that says to our seniors, our Nation has made you a promise, and we intend to keep the promise, that there needs to be a prescription drug benefit as a part of Medicare, and that there needs to be more options and more choices for our senior citizens to be able to design a health care program to meet their particular needs.

Medicare is old; it's antiquated; it's ancient. It is not responsive, and it needs to be fixed. And one of the dangers about fixing Medicare, it becomes what we call a hot political football. People try to use the issue to burn somebody who is trying to talk about Medicare. But I guess I must think I've got an asbestos suit on, because I'm going to talk about the issue until we get it fixed. It's an important issue to get it reformed, and I believe we can make some progress.

I met with both Republicans and Democrats on this issue, and there seems to be a desire and a will to make sure Medicare is responsive. And so I think that's the most important thing we can do pretty quickly for the "olderly." [Laughter]

Yes.

President's Experience as a Student

Q. We're you a good student in fifth grade?

The President. In fifth grade? [Laughter] I'm glad you qualified that for fifth grade. [Laughter] Yes, I was a good student in fifth grade. But I do want to remind you that I went back to my alma mater, which was Yale University, and I received an honorary degree. And I was giving—I gave a few remarks there, and I said, "To the honor students, I say congratulations. And to you C students, I say, you, too, can be President." [Laughter]

But I like to read. I liked to read when I was in the fifth grade, and I still like to read. I read a lot. And it's important to read. It's really important to pay attention to your moms and dads and your teachers who are all encouraging you to practice reading.

Yes.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Q. [Inaudible]

The President. She's asked about the teacher shortage. There are some programs, targeted programs to try to recruit people. One is the Troops for Teachers program I mentioned, where we provide teacher-training money for people getting out of the military to get back in the classroom. That's a place where my wife is focusing to encourage those who may have had another career to get back in the classroom.

The truth of the matter is, most incentives, however, are developed at the State level. One of the things that people get a little mixed up on is, they insist upon local control of schools but expect the Federal Government to pay teachers, for example. That's not the Federal role. The good folks in New Mexico have got to figure out whether or not you want to pay your teachers more.

One of the most important pieces of legislation I signed as the Governor of Texas, we paid each teacher a \$3,000 increase in my third term as Governor, with the attempt to make sure we retained our teachers and kept our teachers in place. I notice they worked on some health insurance during the last legislative session. The States are responsible for making sure the teachers are well paid.

Now, the Federal Government, by giving maximum flexibility to monies coming back

to the State, will help States prioritize, will help States have extra money, for example, if we can have—let me put it this way. By having flexibility, it lets States set the priorities necessary. And if a priority in New Mexico is the recruitment and retention of teachers, flexibility will help you do that. And so there are some things we can do; there's some grant programs. But mainly, it's up to the States to recruit.

Now, one of the things that Laura can do, and I can do, as well, is encourage people who are trying to pick out a career to go to teacher college and to become a teacher. And so we're going to spend time doing that, as well. One of the things we've got to make sure of, however, is that our teacher colleges teach teachers how to teach, by using curriculum that works. And that's a very important part of—[*applause*].

And finally, let me say one other thing. The other thing we can do is—we've got teacher-training money in the budget, and one of the things that's so important for teachers is to feel like they've got the tools necessary to teach. And finally, one other thing we can do for retaining teachers is to make sure classrooms are safe. As a part of an initiative that I've talked about and that Congress worked on is that we've got a teacher and principal and school board liability protection in the education bill that says, you cannot be sued for enforcing reasonable standards of discipline in classrooms across America. And that's a very important part.

The First Lady

Q. Mr. President, thank you. Welcome to my alma mater. I graduated from this school 30 years ago.

The President. Did you make all A's in the fifth grade? [*Laughter*]

Q. All A's, yes, sir. Mr. President, I understand here at Griegos there's a vacancy for a librarian. Do you think that Mrs. Bush would be interested? [*Laughter*]

The President. I'll tell you something about Mrs. Bush, she is—she is doing a great job as the First Lady. She loves books; she loves children; and it's a perfect combination for her to have been a librarian. And one of the things she will do is spend a lot of time encouraging the formation of libraries

and making sure teachers learn—know how to teach, and making sure children learn how to read.

You know another area where we can do a better job of is making sure Head Start is an early learning initiative, that Head Start provides children just the basics, the basics of learning how to read, so that, when they come to Griegos Elementary School as kindergartners, they've got a good opportunity to accelerate.

One of the things we've done is, we've said we're going to have accountability programs, starting in the third grade. Well, we've got to focus early, to make sure that all students get close to the starting line at the same spot so that we don't disadvantage certain schools or children based upon the demographics. Head Start is a great place, and it's a wonderful program. It's a needed program, but it can do a better job of having an education component as a part of its curriculum.

Yes, sir.

Rio Rancho High School

Q. Hi, I'm Nicholas Connor, and I go to Rio Rancho High School. There are so many things I want to say and ask. Could you come to Rio Rancho High tomorrow? [*Laughter*]

The President. No. [*Laughter*] Thank you. But good luck to you. What grade are you going to be in?

Q. I'm going to be a sophomore.

The President. Sophomore, great. You got a driver's license yet?

Q. Permit.

The President. Permit—that's a frightening experience, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

Let me have one more question; then we've got to go. Yes, sir.

President's Early Work Experience

Q. What jobs did you have when you were in high school?

The President. In high school? Let me think about that; it was a long time ago. I actually worked on a ranch in Arizona. And I worked in a law firm, in a law library. I was a—lawyers read a lot of books, and my job was to go around and collect the books after they had read them and put them back in the library—[*laughter*]—a lot of heavy lifting. [*Laughter*]

But that's a good question. I think one of the things you ought to do when you go to high school is to see if you can't find a variety of work experiences. It's important to get as much experience as you can prior to entering what they call the real world.

If you want to be President, I would suggest you become a Governor—[laughter]—because Governors make decisions, and that's what Presidents do. A Governor has got to be somebody who knows how to listen to people, just like a President does, and then have the willingness to make a tough decision and stand by it.

And that's why it's such an honor to be the President. I like making decisions. But really, you know what I really like? I like being the President of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth, because we've got such great people in America.

Thank you all for having me. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Gloria Schatzinger, second grade teacher; and Phyllis Hunter, consultant, Texas Reading Initiative.

Remarks to the Hispano Chamber of Commerce in Albuquerque

August 15, 2001

Thank you very much. *Gracias por tu bienvenida*. Thank you, all. *Es un gran honor para me de esta con ustedes*—it's an honor to be here with you all. Thank you very much for your hospitality. *Sientese*. [Laughter] I appreciate so very much the hospitality. It's nice to come over from your neighboring State to New Mexico. I've always held New Mexico in high regard. It's such a beautiful land, full of decent and caring people, well-represented, I might add, in the United States Senate by my close friend Pete Domenici.

I know this is not a political event, but I can't believe anybody would dare challenge Pete. He's doing such a good job on behalf of the people of New Mexico.

I appreciate Jeff Bingaman, the other Senator from the State of New Mexico. I appreciate his service to the State. I look forward to working with Jeff, to have a coherent energy policy for the United States of America.

I appreciate Heather Wilson. She's a breath of fresh air in the United States Congress.

I want to thank my friend Joe Skeen for coming up from southeast New Mexico. I appreciate *el alcalde de Albuquerque*, the mayor, for being here, as well. But most of all, I want to thank the good folks of the Hispano Chamber. I want to thank Loretta and Phil Castillo for their hospitality. And I want to thank them for their vision. I want to thank them for understanding the importance of community and of the importance of small business in our society.

Archbishop, thank you very much for being here, as well.

You know, the role of Government is not to try to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which people can realize the American Dream. And part of the American Dream is to be able to own your own business, to be able to say, "I want to start my business. I want to nurture my business. I want to grow my business." It's the wonderful thing about America that if you've got an idea, it doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, that that experience ought to be available to everybody.

And so I think we're doing some things in Washington, DC, to make it easier for people to own their own small business. And by the way, it's incredibly important. As my friend Hector Barretto said, most of the new employment in America comes from small-business owners. Small business is the backbone—is the backbone of our economic system. And one of the pieces of incredibly good news about America is, the number of Latino businesses is increasingly dramatically. The fastest growing business sectors in many of our States is the Hispanic-owned businesses. That's good news for America. It's good news for neighborhoods all across our great country. I want to congratulate the entrepreneurs who are here today.

We're making good progress about making the environment more conducive for ownership, starting by cutting the taxes on the people who pay the bills. We didn't just cut the taxes on a few; we said, "If you pay taxes, you ought to get tax relief. We understand that our economy was slowing down, that it's not going the way we'd like it to. And one

way to help kick-start the economy is to give people their own money back. After all, that money isn't the Government's money; it's the people's money. It's the small-business owner's money."

I spent a lot of time reminding people in the United States Congress and in Washington that small businesses are oftentimes unincorporated. The small-business owner is more than likely to be the sole proprietor or have a Subchapter S corporation, which means they pay the highest marginal rate. And so when we cut all rates, including the top rate, what we're really doing is, we're making the business environment more conducive for the small-business owner. We were saying, "The harder you work, the more money you have to reinvest in your business." Tax relief was an incredibly important part of making sure the environment is conducive for the entrepreneurial spirit to flourish in all neighborhoods all across America.

We did the right thing. And by the way, we also did the right thing by getting rid of the estate tax, the death tax, so that a small-business owner—so that somebody that works their life to build up their business can leave it to a son or a daughter. That's part of the American Dream. It's what America ought to be about.

Today I had the privilege of going to Griegos Elementary School to talk about education. Today is the first day of school for many elementary school students here in New Mexico. Education is an important part of making sure that the entrepreneurial spirit reaches everybody in America. If you're educated, you're more likely to be able to realize your dreams. It's so important we get it right.

I want to thank the Hispano Chamber for the \$100,000-a-year scholarship money they provide for hard-working high school students so they can help realize the college dream.

And we're making progress in Washington on education matters. First, I want you to understand, I always remember where I came from. Local control of schools is the best way to make sure every child receives a good education. It's important that we trust the local folks.

I visited with the superintendent of the Albuquerque schools today. We talked about

high standards. We talked about challenging what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. We believe every child can learn. And by the way, we also not only talked about reading and writing and adding and subtracting, basic education; we also talked about making sure that character education is an integral part of the public school system. We want our children to be able to read. We also want them to know the difference between right and wrong and to understand the values that have made America a great place.

You hear a lot of talk about the education bill. I want to share with you my passion. My passion is to make sure no child gets left behind. My passion is to make sure that we clearly understand what's taking place in the schools all across America, and therefore, I've insisted that we have strong accountability measures. It's says, "We must measure to know whether or not children are learning."

Now, you'll hear all kinds of debate on it. You hear some say, "Well, that's too much Government." I don't think it's too much Government to ask—the fundamental question is, can our children read? That's legitimate Government to ask that question. We must ask that question early and often, because when we find children who can't read, we've got to correct the problem early, before it's too late.

And then you'll hear some say, "Well, we shouldn't measure. It's racist to measure." I believe it's racist not to measure. It's so easy to quit on a child whose parents don't speak English as a first language. It's so easy to walk into a classroom of the so-called hard to educate, and to give up and just move them through schools. That's wrong. What America must do is insist upon accountability measures. We must ask the question, do our children know how to read? And if they do, we'll praise and thank the teachers. But if not, we will blow the whistle on failure, insist a curriculum change, give parents more options and choices to make sure that not one single child is left behind in America.

I want to talk about another subject that's incredibly important for not only the border States but all of America, and that's relations with our neighbors to the south, Mexico.

Mexico is a friend of America. Mexico is our neighbor. And we want our neighbors to succeed. We want our neighbors to do well. We want our neighbors to be successful. We understand that a poor neighbor is somebody that's going to be harder to deal with than a neighbor that's prospering. And that's why it's so important for us to tear down barriers and walls that might separate Mexico from the United States. And that's why it's so important for us to stand strong when it comes to free trade with our neighbors to the south.

NAFTA has been good for New Mexico, and it's been good for Mexico. And that's an important relationship that I pledge to continue on. I ask for the Congress to give me trade promotion authority, so that we can not only have free trade with our neighbor to the south, so that we can have free trade throughout the hemisphere.

Oh, I know there's some voices who want to wall us off from Mexico. They want to build a wall. I say to them, they want to condemn our neighbors to the south in poverty, and I refuse to accept that type of isolationist and protectionist attitude.

And let me say one other thing, one other issue that's important. It speaks to the spirit of our Nation. It speaks to whether or not we're going to be true friends with the neighbors to the south. And that's the issue of trucking. There are some people who say we shouldn't allow our friends to the south to send their trucks into the United States. I say that's discrimination against Mexico.

I say that if we're going to have NAFTA, we ought to enforce all of NAFTA. I believe strongly we can have safety on our highways without discriminating against our neighbors to the south. To the protectionists and isolationists, I say if Mexican trucks, if United States trucks and Canadian trucks are allowed to move freely on our highways, we can not only enforce the laws; it will help prosperity spread its roots throughout our neighborhood. And that's important for the future.

I love the spirit of this facility, the idea of citizens saying, "What can I do to improve a neighborhood? What can I do to improve a community in which I live?" It's really the American spirit, isn't it? It's the thing that makes our Nation so different and unique,

I think, is that the fact there are people who are saying, asking the question, "What can I do to help a neighbor in need?" And it's really one of my jobs, is to rally the compassion of America.

I met recently with members of the faith community here in Albuquerque. We talked about the power of faith and good works at the grassroots level throughout our society. I welcome community-based programs. And you should welcome faith-based programs, that all exist—that all exist because somebody has heard a calling much greater than Government, much greater than—much greater than laws that can be passed out of the Congress. No, the great spirit of America lies in the hearts and souls of our wonderful citizenry, symbolized by this building, the willingness of people to help a neighbor in need, the willingness of good folks who have done pretty well in life to come together and say, "How can I help a neighbor find a job? What can I do to help a neighbor develop a skill?"

No, this is the spirit of America captured right here in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I want to applaud you all for giving me a chance to come by. I want to thank you for giving me a chance to serve the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth, full of the most decent people.

Thank you for coming. May God bless. May God bless New Mexico and the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. outside the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce building. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jim Baca of Albuquerque; Loretta Armenta, president and chief executive officer, and Joseph "Phil" Castillo, chairman, Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce; Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, NM; and H. Bradford Allison, superintendent, Albuquerque Public School District.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring Senator Pete V. Domenici in Albuquerque

August 15, 2001

Thank you very much. Thank you all very much. Be seated, please. Thank you all very

much for that warm New Mexican welcome. Gosh, we've had a great day in Albuquerque, haven't we, Pete? We've had a great day. It's really fun to travel with such a decent man around your important city. I'm really glad I came. No better way to end it than to urge the good folks of New Mexico to send this good man back to the United States Senate.

I appreciate Congresswoman Heather Wilson for being here. We need to send her back, too, by the way. She's plenty capable. So is my friend Joe Skeen. I'm honored that Joe came up and worked today with us, as well. I want to thank your Lieutenant Governor and all the State officials who joined us today. I particularly want to thank Bill Keleher and John Dendahl for their leadership of our party.

I want to thank my friend Ken. Where are you, Kenny? Thank you so much for your leadership on this event, and thank you for your friendship. You've done a great job. Sherolyn Smith, Rick Alvidrez, I want to thank you all for setting up this event. And I want to thank each and every one of you for contributing to Pete's reelection. It's really important that you've done so.

Like you, I can't believe anybody would dare run against him. *[Laughter]* But somebody might be foolish enough to. In which case, we need to send the message that when you get a good, decent man representing an important State, send him back in Washington, keep him in Washington.

The thing I've learned about Pete Domenici, he's a man of great passion. He's a passionate person. He's passionate about subjects that are dear to his heart. He's a national leader—along with his beautiful wife—in mental health. It's an important issue. And by the way, we both married pretty darn well. *[Laughter]* I'm sorry my wife isn't here. She's holding down the fort in Crawford, Texas. I like to tell people that I love my new address, but I also love my home. It's important never to forget where you came from. I came from Texas. I will serve my time in Washington, and I'll return back to Texas.

Pete's passionate on research. He's passionate about research in New Mexican laboratories. Trust me. *[Laughter]* He's been to the Oval Office a lot. *[Laughter]* By the way, it's important to have a Senator who can

come into the Oval Office representing your State. You want a Senator who will have the President return his phone calls.

He talks about making sure New Mexico stays on the leading edge of important research. And you've got a President who's listening to him, by the way. Pete is passionate about the budget. He's brought fiscal sanity to Washington, DC. You see, the tendency in Washington is to want to overspend. Sometimes people forget up there, they're not spending the Government's money; they're spending the people's money. And Pete is a fiscal watchdog for the taxpayers' money.

Pete is passionate about his family. It's important to have a person in Washington, DC, who loves his family. As a matter of fact, there's nothing more important for America than family. Pete personifies family. Pete loves the people of New Mexico. He's passionate about the people of New Mexico, like he's passionate about the State of New Mexico. It's important to have a passionate American representing your State.

But he's also more than that. He's a man of enormous dignity and integrity. And this Nation needs more leaders that set good examples for our young, like Pete Domenici.

I've got a selfish reason for getting him back up there. I need his help. *[Laughter]* We're working on some important agenda items for the American people, and we're making good progress, but there is more to do.

You know, when I went up to Washington, I was a little disturbed at the tone that was taking place. I can remember sitting in Austin, Texas, being perplexed and disturbed by the rancor and the bitterness that seemed to have constantly gripped our Nation's Capital. And I made a determined effort to go change the tone. We can disagree in Washington, but we should do so in a respectful way. We need to respect each other more. We need to hold up the American people more than we hold up our own political parties, it seems like to me, to get some things done. And we're making good progress.

One of the areas where we're making good progress is the budget—it is to say to the American people through our budget, "We're going to be responsible with your

money.” As Pete mentioned, we’ve inherited some problems. But what the heck, I like to solve problems. That’s my job. And one of the problems we inherited was an economy that was sputtering along and slowing down. And one way to make sure that we kick-start our economy is to give people their money back. And so we campaigned on, argued for, and I had the honor of signing in the White House the largest tax reduction in a generation.

It was necessary. And it’s the right thing to do. You’ll hear them screaming up in Washington, “Oh, we’re running out of money.” Well, that’s because they want to spend every single dime that ever gets up there. You’ll hear people say, “Well, the surplus is going away because of the tax cut.” No, folks, the economy is slowing down, which means we have less projected money, and that’s why we needed tax relief. Money back to people are going to help kick-start this economy.

And I want to remind you of something. We still have the largest surplus—second largest surplus in the Nation’s history. And we’re still paying down more debt than ever paid down before in our Nation’s history. And the tax relief plan was eminently fair.

See, it used to be up there in Washington they’d say, “Well, we’re going to pick and choose the winners and losers when it came to tax relief. You get tax relief. You don’t get tax relief.” The attitude of Senator Domenici and myself and the Members of the congressional delegation who are here said, “If we’re going to have tax relief, let’s provide tax relief for everybody who pays taxes.” And that’s the fair way to do it. It’s a responsible, fair tax program.

We also sent a clear message to small-business owners and farmers and ranchers when we said, “We need to get rid of the death tax.” The death tax is unfair to people who have built up a business. The death tax is unfair to the small-business owner who wants to leave a business to a son or a daughter. The death tax is unfair because we’re taxing entrepreneurs and producers twice in America. The Tax Code not only reduced all rates and provided tax rebates, it also got rid of the onerous death tax, which is going to make the code more fair and more responsible.

Now, we’re going to have a fight over the budget coming up. And fortunately, we’ve got a good man named Domenici who is going help fight off the big spenders. They will push for more money here, and they’ll push for more money there. But I want to remind you, the growth in the budget that Pete passed out of the Senate and was concurred by both the Senate and the House, provides responsible growth in our budget. And I can assure, Mr. Chairman—or I wish would be Mr. Chairman—[laughter]—should be Mr. Chairman, and will be Mr. Chairman after next 2002—and I want the Members of Congress to hear that once we set a budget we’re going to stick by it. And if not, I’m going to use the veto pen of the President of the United States to keep fiscal sanity in Washington, DC.

Today we had the pleasure of going to an elementary school, the first day of school. Gosh, it was exhilarating to shake hands with the first graders and the second graders that were just showing up. Their mothers and dads were thrilled to get them back in school, it seemed like. [Laughter] The teachers were great. They were all excited. And my message to the folks assembled there was this: that education is a domestic priority of mine. I know it’s one of Pete’s, as well. It’s so important we get it right in America that every child gets educated.

We passed a good bill out of the House and a good bill out of the Senate. And I hope they don’t play politics with it. They need to get the conference committee, get the bill resolved, and get it on my desk. And let me explain to you some of the principles involved in the education bill.

First, it trusts the local folks to run the schools. I strongly believe in local control of our schools. I believe we need to pass more power and flexibility and authority out of Washington to the folks in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The bill does that.

There’s some wonderful programs in the bill. One of them is a reading initiative that my wife is all involved in, and I’m passionate about. I’ll never forget the phrase of Phyllis Hunter in Houston, Texas. She stood up in front of a large crowd of people, and she said, “You know, Governor”—and I was Governor then—she said, “Governor, reading is the

new civil right.” I believe that. I believe reading is a civil right. I believe when you can learn to read, then you can learn, and then you can access the American Dream.

The sad thing is, too many of our children can’t read. And I intend to do something about it. Not only have we targeted money for diagnostic tools to make sure we determine whether or not young children have got problems that we correct early, before it’s too late, we’ve got teacher-training money; we’ve got intervention money. But the core of the education bill is accountability. The core of the education bill says that if you receive any taxpayer’s money, you must measure. You must show us whether or not children are reading and writing and adding and subtracting.

Now, I know there’s a lot of—oh, you hear all kinds of arguments about whether or not that should take place. Some will say, “Well, you can’t measure because it means there’s too much Government.” My attitude about that is, is that if we’re spending taxpayers’ money, it seems like we want to know whether or not it’s working. It seems like it makes sense to ask the question, what are the results? And there’s no more important place to ask, what are the results, than whether or not the children of the United States can read or write or add and subtract.

And then there are those who say, on the accountability system, it is racist to test. Folks, I’m going to tell you as plainly as I can, it’s racist not to test, because guess who gets left behind in a system where there’s no accountability? It is so easy to quit on a child whose parents do not speak English as a first language. It’s so easy to walk into a classroom full of the so-called hard to educate and say, “Let’s don’t test. Let’s just move people through.”

We cannot have a system that doesn’t hold each child is precious. And so the cornerstone of reform coming out of Washington, DC, is more money, focused money, but as well, the demand for strong accountability, so that we can praise the teachers and principals and superintendents who are getting it right but, as importantly, blow the whistle on failure when we find children trapped in schools that won’t teach and won’t change.

There are no second-rate children in America and no second-rate dreams.

Pete mentioned we’re making progress in bringing some sanity to America when it comes to an energy policy. This country has drifted along without an energy policy. And we laid out a good, constructive plan. It’s a plan that says we can do a better job of conserving our resources. And the Federal Government is beginning to take a role. We’re making sure that we purchase vampire defeating devices. A vampire is a device like a charger for a telephone. When you plug it into a wall and your phone may not be in there but the charger is, it still eats a lot of electricity—or more than it should. Some entrepreneurs came along and invented a device that uses 7 times less energy. So we’re going to start using those devices to set the example that we can do a better job of using technology to save.

But California is the State that’s got the best conservation record in the country. And yet, they ran out of energy. [*Laughter*] Now, one of the things they’re doing is they’re building 12 more powerplants. And that’s great, and our Government has helped them. We’ve expedited the permitting of the plants. Those plants are going to require natural gas to power them. And we’ve got to get the gas from somewhere. And so, on the one hand, we need better conservation. On the other hand, we need more exploration for the resources. I’d like us to be less dependent on foreign sources of energy. I think it’s going to make our foreign policy a lot more—[*applause*].

Washington has been struggling with what they call Patients’ Bill of Rights for the last couple of sessions. I made up my mind we’re going to get a good Patients’ Bill of Rights out of the Congress, one that heralds the relationship between patient and doctor but one that doesn’t encourage frivolous and junk lawsuits that will cause people to lose their health insurance. We got a good bill out of the House, a not so good bill out of the Senate. And I’m hopeful we can get—finally get a good Patients’ Bill of Rights to begin meaningful reform of our health care system in America.

The Vice President and I spent a lot of time in the campaign—and by the way, he’s

doing great. And what a heck of a selection I made. As he likes to put it, "Who said those three electoral votes in Wyoming don't matter?" [Laughter] What really matters, he's a steady hand. He's capable. We said we're going to make sure that our military remains strong and ready.

In one of my trips overseas, I went to Kosovo, and I signed another pay raise for the troops. It's important to make sure those who wear the uniform are well paid, well housed, and well treated. We're doing a much better job in America of treating our folks right.

We've got big budget increases in defense. But I also want you to know that ours is an administration that believes in vision, that there's got to be a plan. So I've asked Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld to develop a strategic vision for what our military ought to look like today and what it ought to look like tomorrow to keep the peace; how we can remain strong and ready this moment; and as importantly, how we can use technologies to devise a military that will be harder to find, more lethal when it moves, easier to move, and that will incorporate the new technologies so that we don't waste taxpayers' money when it comes to building the weapons systems of the future.

One of the things that you probably read about is that I believe that, as we go into the 21st century, we need to have new strategic relations with some of our old enemies. I had some fascinating meetings with Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia. I told him in plain terms—I said, "Mr. President, you don't have anything to fear from the United States. We're a peaceful nation. We don't view you as our enemy. The true threats facing the United States are threats from terrorist nations, nations that they call rogue nations, nations that are developing weapons of mass destruction that may be pointed at us, may be pointed at our friends, the Israelis, or other allies we have, to hold us hostage, conduct international blackmail. It's the true threat, Mr. Putin. And therefore, we need to get rid of those ancient treaties, codified during a time when we hated each other, so that America can develop the technologies and defenses necessary to protect ourselves

and our allies from the true threats of the 21st century."

The ABM Treaty is outmoded, outdated. It codified a hateful relationship that no longer exists. We need to move beyond the days of the cold war and free this great freedom-loving people to provide protections for freedom-loving people from all around the world by getting rid of the ABM Treaty once and for all.

We have told our friends and allies around the world we will consult with them, and we will. And I told Mr. Putin, come along with us. It's a chance to set up a new strategic relationship. And we'll see how it goes. I think we're making pretty good progress. My point to you is that we'll remain strong when it comes to our military and wise when it comes to our planning and ready when it comes to the true threats that face the American people as we head into the 21st century.

And finally, I had a fantastic meeting today with members of the faith community here in New Mexico. Bishop, thank you for being here today, sir. And I want to thank Pete for inviting folks to come and to hear me discuss the philosophy behind a faith-based/community-based initiative.

We're moving beyond the old welfare paradigm in America. I gave a speech at Notre Dame and talked about the fact that another Texas President gave a graduation speech and talked about a welfare help plan, and that was Lyndon Johnson, and the Great Society began. And then there was welfare reform signed by my predecessor that said, people must be independent in America, and you've got to work. And it had some successes; it really did. A lot of folks went from welfare to work, but there's still more work to do. There's a lot of people in our society who hurt, a lot of people who really have no hope. Gosh, I remember one of the times I was at a juvenile justice facility in Texas, and I was talking about the American Dream. A little fellow who had been incarcerated said, "What does that mean? What is an American Dream?" He doesn't understand dreaming. He doesn't understand setting goals.

There's a lot of hopelessness, a lot of addiction, a lot of people lost. And we've got to do something about it in America. We're

too good a people to allow that to continue. But what Government cannot do is change hearts. Government can't inspire. We're good for law. We can spend money, but money isn't the only answer. In many cases, the lost soul needs somebody to say, "I love you," or to put your arm around you and say, "America is meant for you." We need mentors all across America saying to young children whose parents may be in prison, for example, "I care about you. I want you to understand somebody cares."

And so one of the most important initiatives that we're discussing in Washington is how do we unleash the great passion and compassion of America. How do we unleash those who have heard the call to love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves; those not inspired by Government, necessarily, but inspired by a higher calling. The people of faith who live in every neighborhood across America must not be feared by our Government, but energized and welcomed when it comes to healing those lost souls. It's a powerful initiative because it taps the great strength of America. And the great strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizenry.

I can't tell you what an honor it is to represent the people of this country. My dream is for us to be a more responsible nation, a nation when the moms and dads of the world understand their most important job is not their day job, but the job of loving the children they happen to have brought into this world, and love them with all their hearts and all their souls.

But a responsible nation also requires corporate America to be responsible. It requires all of us to be responsible to shepherd our resources well. And as importantly, it requires all of us to ask the question, if we see a neighbor in need, shall we not—shall we make sure we don't cross to the other side of the road? Shouldn't we as a responsible citizen help a neighbor and not expect Government to do so? Shouldn't we find out areas where we can help somebody who's crying out for help? And the answer is, in this country, absolutely. But responsible societies begin with responsible leaders.

And that's why I'm so proud to support Pete Domenici for the United States Senate

again. He understands responsibility. He lives it every single day. And my hope is that the good people of New Mexico don't make a terrible error. My hope is the good people of New Mexico send this good man back to Washington, DC, with a resounding victory.

Thank you all for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:05 p.m. at the Sheraton Old Town Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Walter Bradley of New Mexico; John Dendahl, chairman, Sherolyn Smith DeSantis, second vice chairman, and Ken Zangara, Bernalillo county chairman, New Mexico Republican Party; Nancy Domenici, wife of Senator Domenici; Rick Alvidrez, board of directors member, Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce; Archbishop Michal J. Sheehan, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, who gave the invocation; Bill Keleher, campaign chairman, People for Pete Domenici; and Phyllis Hunter, consultant, Texas Reading Initiative. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Floods in Thailand

August 16, 2001

I am very saddened to learn of the tragic deaths that have occurred as a result of ongoing flooding in northern Thailand. This disaster, which has already claimed more than 100 lives, is particularly cruel because it occurred during a holiday weekend, when many Thais had traveled to their hometowns and villages. The American people join me in sending our condolences to all those in Thailand who have lost loved ones, suffered injury or other loss as a result of the flooding. Our sympathy for the Thai people at this difficult time is heightened by our common experience with recent flooding, casualties, and destruction.

The United States stands ready to assist the Royal Thai Government and the Thai people to respond to the effects of the flooding. Our Embassy in Bangkok is in the process of providing emergency support, through the Thai Red Cross, to the initial relief efforts. I hope that our assistance, and the lasting friendship of the United States with the Royal Thai Government and the Thai people, will be helpful as Thailand works to overcome the tragic effects of the flooding.

Statement on the Report of the White House Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

August 16, 2001

On January 29, 2001, I signed an Executive order creating Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in the Departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Justice, and Education. I charged each Center to conduct a Department-wide audit and identify all existing barriers to the participation of faith-based and community organizations in Federal social service programs.

Over the past 6 months, five Cabinet Offices for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives have examined administrative procedures, programs, and policies. Today the White House Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives reported their findings.

The report, entitled "Unlevel Playing Field," highlights the funding gap between the Government and the grassroots. It points out significant barriers organizations face in obtaining Federal support for their compassionate work. And it shows clearly how much work needs to be done to mobilize the armies of compassion.

The Cabinet Centers have done vitally important work in examining Federal social service programs. We now see exactly what kind of obstacles stand in the way of a more compassionate America. Our emphasis must always remain on getting compassionate results. We look forward to addressing these inequities through legislation, administrative action, and education. Americans in need are depending upon it.

Statement on the Death of Representative Floyd Spence

August 16, 2001

I am deeply saddened by the loss of my friend Floyd Spence. He was a leader of great courage and determination, especially since his double-lung transplant surgery 13 years ago. As a Congressman, he will be remembered as a true friend of the men and women in our armed services and a steadfast

servant of his fellow South Carolinians. Laura and I send our prayers to his wife, Debbie, and Floyd's children and grandchildren.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

August 13

In the morning, the President traveled to Meridian, TX, and later returned to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

August 14

In the morning, the President traveled to Rocky Mountain National Park, CO.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Denver, CO, where he attended a Major League Baseball game at Coors Field in the evening.

The President announced his intention to designate Patrick Henry Wood III as Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

August 15

In the morning, the President traveled to Albuquerque, NM. In the evening, he returned to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia to Washington for an official working visit on September 19.

August 16

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel to discuss the recent violence in the Middle East.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kevin Joseph McGuire to be Ambassador to Namibia.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Marshall to be Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development for Management.

The President announced his intention to nominate Constance Berry Newman to be Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development for the Bureau of Africa.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arden Bement, Jr., to be Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology at the Department of Commerce.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on July 27 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Kentucky and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on July 27 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in the District of Columbia and ordered Federal aid to supplement local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and mudslides on August 10–12.

August 17

The President announced his intention to nominate Morris X. Winn to be Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for Administration and Resource Management.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael Smith to be Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy at the Department of Energy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Barry D. Crane to be Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy for Supply Reduction.

The President announced his intention to nominate Emmy B. Simmons to be Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development for International Economics and Agriculture.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard Clarida to be Assistant

Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jay B. Stephens to be Associate Attorney General. The President also announced that Phil Perry will serve as Acting Associate Attorney General until the confirmation of Mr. Stephens.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released August 13

Statement by the Press Secretary: On Signature of a Political Settlement in Macedonia

Released August 15

Statement by the Press Secretary: President of Indonesia To Visit Washington

Released August 16

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Kentucky

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Tennessee

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to the District of Columbia

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved August 13

H.R. 2213 / Public Law 107–25
To respond to the continuing economic crisis adversely affecting American agricultural producers

Approved August 17

H.R. 2131 / Public Law 107–26
To reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 through fiscal year 2004, and for other purposes